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FOL RPT BERLIN 6885 ACTION SECSTATE 22 AUG 77 QUOTE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: APER, PFOR, PDIP, GE, US (BOLEN, DAVID)
SUBJECT: PRESENTATION OF CREDENTIALS TO CHAIRMAN OF
- STATE COUNCIL HONECKER

REF: A. BERLIN 6858, B. STATE 196718.

SUMMARY: IN A FIFTY-MINUTE MEETING FOLLOWING THE PRESEN-
TATION OF MY CREDENTIALS TODAY, CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL
HONECKER REPEATEDLY STRESSED THE GDR'S DESIRE TO MOVE
FORWARD IN DEVELOPING GOOD BILATERAL RELATIONS WITH THE
UNITED STATES. IN THIS CONNECTION HE EMPHASIZED THE NEED
FOR GOOD US-SOVIET RELATIONS AS A FACTOR IN
DEVELOPING US-GDR COOPERATION. HE HOPED THE DIALOGUE
BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIET UNION ON SALT AND OTHER SUCH
MATTERS WOULD CONTINUE. HONECKER SUPPORTED THE FOREIGN
MINISTER'S FORTHCOMING COMMENTS (REF A) ON OUTSTANDING
BILATERAL ISSUES OF INTEREST TO US, INCLUDING HUMANITARIAN
CASES, CLAIMS AND CONSULAR CONVENTION. THE CHAIRMAN
RAISED THE ISSUE OF THE SUBSTANTIAL US TRADE SURPLUS WITH
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THE GDR, ALLUDED TO JACKSON-VANIK AND EXPRESSED HOPE WAYS
COULD BE FOUND TO INCREASE GDR EXPORTS TO THE US. HONECKER
WAS PLEASED ABOUT THE SECRETARY'S WILLINGNESS TO MEET WITH
FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER AT THE UNGA AND AGREED THAT THIS
MEETING COULD BE HELPFUL IN BRINGING ABOUT PROGRESS ON A
RANGE OF ISSUES OF INTEREST TO BOTH COUNTRIES. END SUMMARY.

1. I MET WITH CHAIRMAN OF STATE COUNCIL HONECKER AUGUST 22
TO PRESENT MY LETTER OF CREDENCE AND LETTER OF RECALL OF
AMBASSADOR COOPER. IN A BRIEF FORMAL CEREMONY I EXPRESSED

APPRECIATION FOR HONECKER'S KINDNESS IN RECEIVING ME SO SOON AFTER MY ARRIVAL THREE DAYS AGO. I CONVEYED GREETINGS FROM THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES. I EXPRESSED OUR HOPE AND EXPECTATION THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE GDR WILL BE BROADENED AND DEEPENED IN THE MONTHS AND YEARS TO COME. I TOLD HONECKER IT WOULD BE MY TASK AND MY PLEASURE TO WORK TOWARD THAT GOAL. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE WARM WELCOME I HAD

RECEIVED AND INDICATED MY DESIRE TO WORK WITH HIM AND OTHER LEADERS TO MOVE OUR RELATIONS FORWARD.

2. HONECKER IN A BRIEF RESPONSE WELCOMED ME TO THE GDR AND REQUESTED THAT I CONVEY GREETINGS TO THE PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT OF THE UNITED STATES. HE SAID THE GDR WANTED TO DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE WISHED ME SUCCESS IN MY MISSIONS.

3. AFTER THE FORMAL CEREMONY, HONECKER INVITED ME TO HIS OFFICE FOR A PRIVATE CHAT WHICH LASTED ABOUT FIFTY MINUTES. ALSO PRESENT WERE SECRETARY OF COUNCIL OF STATE EICHLER AND DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GRUNERT. HONECKER BEGAN THE MEETING BY REITERATING THE GDR DESIRE TO DEVELOP GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE NOTED THAT SUCH RELATIONS WOULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TO OUR COUNTRIES AND WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER OVERALL EAST-WEST RELATIONS. HE ALSO COMMENTED ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS, CSCE, THE GDR MAY 12 AIDE MEMOIRE ON US-GDR BILATERAL RELATIONS, TRADE IMBALANCE, AND CULTURAL COOPERATION.

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RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES. HE NOTED THAT SUCH RELATIONS WOULD BE MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL TO OUR COUNTRIES AND WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO BETTER OVERALL EAST-WEST RELATIONS. HE ALSO COMMENTED ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS, CSCE, THE GDR MAY 12 AIDE MEMOIRE ON US-GDR BILATERAL RELATIONS, TRADE IMBALANCE, AND CULTURAL COOPERATION.

4. US-SOVIET RELATIONS. HONECKER EMPHASIZED REPEATEDLY THE NEED FOR GOOD US-SOVIET RELATIONS. HE HOPED A PEACEFUL DIALOGUE BETWEEN THE US AND THE SOVIETS ON SALT AND OTHER MATTERS WOULD CONTINUE IN THE INTEREST OF PEACE. HE SAID THERE WAS NO POINT IN DEBATING THE MERITS OF CAPITALISM VS. SOCIALISM. THERE WAS "SIMPLY NO ALTERNATIVE TO PEACEFUL COEXISTENCE." US-GDR RELATIONS WOULD FLOURISH BETTER IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF DETENTE. HE SAW THIS AS VERY IMPORTANT.

5. I CALLED HONECKER'S ATTENTION TO PRESIDENT CARTER'S JULY 21 SPEECH ON US-SOVIET RELATIONS. I NOTED OUR DESIRE FOR STRATEGIC ARMS LIMITATIONS, REDUCTION IN AND FREEZE ON NEW TECHNOLOGY WHICH WOULD PROVIDE BALANCED SECURITY FOR BOTH SIDES. I TOLD HONECKER WE WERE SEEKING A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS AND DESIRED TO MOVE FORWARD ON MBFR. I ALSO MENTIONED THE INDIAN OCEAN TALKS AND THE SECRETARY'S FORTHCOMING MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER GROMYKO ON SALT. I TOLD HONECKER WE WELCOMED PRESIDENT BREZHNEV'S DEPICTION OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S SPEECH AS POSITIVE, AND HIS WILLINGNESS TO SEEK SOLUTIONS. I EX-

PRESSED THE BELIEF THERE WAS GOOD REASON TO HOPE FOR
CONTINUED DEVELOPMENT OF DETENTE.

6. I ALSO TOLD HONECKER WE RECOGNIZED THE DIFFERENCE IN
POLITICAL SYSTEMS WHICH STEMS FROM HISTORY, DIFFERENT
BELIEFS AND VALUES; CERTAIN COMPETITION WOULD CONTINUE
BETWEEN THE TWO SYSTEMS. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WERE OVER-
LAPPING INTERESTS; IT WAS IMPORTANT FOR BOTH SIDES TO
BUILD ON THESE COMMON INTERESTS IN ORDER TO DEVELOP
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COOPERATION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST BASED ON MUTUAL RESPECT
AND EQUALITY.

7. US-GDR BILATERAL RELATIONS. HONECKER MENTIONED
THE GDR MAY 12 AIDE MEMOIRE CONTAINING HIS
GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER DEVELOPING RELATIONS
WITH THE UNITED STATES. I NOTED THAT FOREIGN MINISTER
FISCHER HAD CALLED THIS AIDE MEMOIRE TO MY ATTENTION IN
OUR MEETING ON AUGUST 19. HONECKER SAID THE GDR WANTED
TO MOVE FORWARD IN IMPLEMENTING THESE PROPOSALS, WHICH
WERE CONSISTENT WITH THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT.

8. I TOLD HONECKER THAT I HAD DISCUSSED OVERALL US-GDR
RELATIONS WITH AMBASSADORS COOPER AND SIEBER, SENIOR
OFFICIALS IN THE EXECUTIVE BRANCH, AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS.
I WAS AWARE THERE HAD BEEN IMPORTANT STEP BY STEP DEVELOP-
MENTS OF OUR RELATIONS. I REITERATED THE ADMINISTRATION'S
DESIRE TO BUILD ON THIS RECORD AND TO BROADEN AND DEEPEN
RELATIONS. THIS DESIRE FOR BETTER RELATIONS WAS GROUNDED
IN OUR WISH TO DEVELOP MORE STABLE AND BENEFICIAL RELATIONS
BETWEEN THE PEOPLES OF THE EAST AND WEST AND TO MOVE FOR-
WARD ON THE CURRENT AGENDA ON EAST-WEST RELATIONS. I TOLD
HONECKER THAT GOOD US-GDR RELATIONS ARE AN ESSENTIAL
INGREDIENT IN THIS EFFORT.

9. I INFORMED HONECKER THAT I HAD GIVEN MY VIEWS ON WAYS
TO MOVE OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS FORWARD IN AN EARLIER CON-
VERSATION WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER. HOWEVER, IN VIEW
OF THEIR IMPORTANCE, I FELT IT NECESSARY TO REPEAT THEM IN
PART.

10. HUMANITARIAN CASES. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE
PROGRESS IN RESOLVING HUMANITARIAN CASES INVOLVING
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AMERICAN CITIZENS AND THEIR RELATIVES IN THE GDR. I TOLD
HONECKER THIS PROGRESS HAD BEEN NOTED WITH FAVOR IN THE
CONGRESS AND AMONG THE AMERICAN PUBLIC; IT HAD CREATED A
BETTER ATMOSPHERE FOR THE FUTURE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR

RELATIONS. I STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE AMERICAN PEOPLE ATTACH TO ETHNIC AND FAMILY TIES AND EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT EMERGENCY VISITATION CASES TO THE US INVOLVING GDR CITIZENS SHOULD BE PROCESSED QUICKLY. THIS WOULD BE HELPFUL IN MAINTAINING THE FAVORABLE IMPRESSION ALREADY CREATED AND SUPPORT FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS. HONECKER INDICATED HE UNDERSTOOD THE IMPORTANCE THE US ATTACHED TO THIS MATTER. THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S VIEWS ON THE HANDLING OF CASES OF THIS KIND HAD HIS TOTAL SUPPORT. THE GDR WAS PREPARED TO COOPERATE. HONECKER ADDED THAT HE

WOULD LIKE TO SEE MORE AMERICANS VISIT THE GDR; "WE NEED MORE AMERICAN TOURISTS."

11. CLAIMS. I TOLD HONECKER ABOUT MY CONVERSATION WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER ON CLAIMS SETTLEMENT AND MY PROPOSAL THAT OFFICIALS MEET TO DISCUSS CLAIMS PROCEDURES IN OUR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES. THE CENTRAL PURPOSE OF THIS PROPOSAL WOULD BE TO WORK OUT PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES WHICH WOULD FACILITATE FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS. HONECKER SAID HE AGREED WITH THIS PROPOSAL.

12. I ALSO RAISED THE JEWISH CLAIMS ISSUE WITH HONECKER. I TOLD HIM THAT TALKS WITH THE CONFERENCE ON JEWISH MATERIAL CLAIMS SHOULD CONTINUE WITH A VIEW TO FINDING A SOLUTION. SUCH TALKS WOULD FIND A FAVORABLE ECHO IN THE CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC. HONECKER SAID THE GDR HAD NOT BROKEN OFF THE TALKS. PERHAPS THE EARLIER GDR OFFER TO THE CONFERENCE HAD BEEN MISUNDERSTOOD. HE NOTED THAT TALKS HAD BEEN CONDUCTED WITH THE COMMITTEE ON ANTI-FASCIST RESISTANCE FIGHTERS AND SUGGESTED THAT THEY SHOULD CONTINUE. HE THEN LAUNCHED INTO A LONG HISTORICAL REVIEW OF HIS PERSECUTION BY THE NAZIS, NOTED THAT HE HAD WITNESSED THE PERSECUTION OF JEWS, AND ASSERTED THERE WAS NO DISCRIMINATION. CONFIDENTIAL

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TION OF JEWS IN THE GDR; THEY WERE FREE TO PRACTICE THEIR RELIGION. HE COMMENTED ON THE POST-WAR DIFFICULTY IN DEVELOPING THE GDR ECONOMY AND SAID THE CREATION OF THE GDR WAS A FORM OF COMPENSATION. COMMENT: I GAINED THE IMPRESSION THAT HONECKER WAS PREPARED TO CONTINUE THE DIALOGUE WITH THE CONFERENCE, BUT WAS CONCERNED ABOUT LIMITED GDR MEANS TO MEET THE CONFERENCE REQUEST.

13. CONSULAR CONVENTION: I EMPHASIZED THAT THE CONSULAR CONVENTION WAS OF KEY IMPORTANCE. I WANTED TO UNDERSCORE THIS ISSUE. I TOLD HIM WE SEE THE CONSULAR CONVENTION AS BASIC FOR GOOD RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES. CONCLUSION OF A CONSULAR CONVENTION WOULD CONTRIBUTE TO POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT OF OUR RELATIONS. AS I HAD INDICATED EARLIER WE SEEK POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT; SINCE THE AMERICAN PUBLIC AND THE CONGRESS ATTACH GREAT IMPORTANCE TO CONSULAR PROTECTION, IT WAS NECESSARY TO HAVE A CONSULAR CONVENTION. I NOTED THIS MATTER HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH THE FOREIGN MINISTER

AND STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF PUTTING THIS MATTER BEHIND AND PROVIDING A BASIS FOR REGULARIZING OUR RELATIONS. ONE POSSIBLE COMPROMISE SOLUTION TO THE NATIONALITY QUESTION HAD BEEN PRESENTED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER. HONECKER SAID HE SUPPORTED THE FOREIGN MINISTER'S COMMENTS AND HOPED FOR AN EARLY CONCLUSION TO A CONSULAR AGREEMENT; "WE SHOULD DEVOTE OUR BEST EFFORTS TO FINDING A SOLUTION."

14. TRADE. HONECKER RAISED THE QUESTION OF THE TRADE IMBALANCE BETWEEN THE US AND THE GDR. IMPORTS FROM THE US AMOUNTED TO 1.4 BILLION MARK; US IMPORTS FROM THE GDR TOTALED ONLY 50 MILLION MARK. HONECKER REFERRED TO THE "LEGISLATION" AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT OUR ECONOMIC COUNSELORS WOULD FIND A WAY TO EXPAND TRADE. I NOTED THE CURRENT GROWTH IN THE EXPANSION OF TRADE BETWEEN THE US AND THE GDR. WE APPRECIATED THE GRAIN TRADE AND WOULD REMAIN CONFIDENTIAL

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A RELIABLE SUPPLIER. I REFERRED TO MY TALKS IN NEW YORK WITH AMERICAN BUSINESS FIRMS, INCLUDING BANKS. I INFORMED HIM THAT THE GDR ENJOYED A GOOD REPUTATION IN THE AMERICAN BUSINESS COMMUNITY. CONTACTS BETWEEN THE GDR TRADE ORGANIZATIONS AND AMERICAN FIRMS WERE INCREASING. WE ENCOURAGE THESE DEVELOPMENTS AS THE BEST WAY TO PROCEED AT THIS TIME. I NOTED THE GDR TRADE AND ECONOMIC COUNCILS WERE OPERATIONAL. I MENTIONED MY TALKS WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE AND OUR DESIRE TO CONTINUE PRIVATE AND OFFICIAL PARTICIPATION IN THE LEIPZIG FAIR, AND TO SEND TECHNICAL SALES SEMINARS TO THE GDR TO DISCUSS SALES POTENTIALS. I ALSO MENTIONED THAT WE WERE PREPARED TO REVIEW GDR REQUESTS FOR REPRESENTATION OF OTHER TRADE ORGANIZATIONS IN THE UNITED STATES, DEPENDING ON THE STATE OF OUR RELATIONS.

15. CULTURAL. HONECKER ALSO TOOK THE INITIATIVE IN EXPRESSING THE DESIRE FOR EXPANSION OF CULTURAL EXCHANGES WITH THE UNITED STATES. IN THIS CONNECTION HE NOTED THAT THE GDR WAS SENDING THE WORLD-FAMOUS DRESDEN ART EXHIBIT TO THE UNITED STATES AT GREAT EXPENSE TO THE GDR. I TOLD HIM WE FAVOR EXPANDED EXCHANGES IN ACADEMIC, SCIENTIFIC, CULTURAL AND SPORTS FIELDS. I EXPRESSED REGRET THAT SOME OF OUR PROPOSALS FOR CULTURAL PRESENTATIONS IN THE GDR IN 1977 HAD NOT MATERIALIZED. I HOPED WE COULD IMPLEMENT THESE PROPOSALS IN EARLY 1978. IN THE MEANTIME, OUR OFFICIALS COULD WORK TOWARD A CULTURAL AGREEMENT THAT WOULD STIMULATE FUTURE EXCHANGES IN THE CULTURAL FIELD.

16. SECRETARY'S MEETING WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER. I INFORMED HONECKER THAT SECRETARY VANCE IS PREPARED TO MEET WITH FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER AT THE UNGA IF THIS COULD BE WORKED OUT ON THEIR RESPECTIVE SCHEDULES. I STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF PROGRESS IN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS

IN DEVELOPING OUR RELATIONS TO INSURE A FRUITFUL MEETING
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BETWEEN THE SECRETARY AND FOREIGN MINISTER FISCHER AND TO
PROVIDE A BACKDROP FOR FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF RELATIONS.
HONECKER AGREED AND SAID HE WAS PLEASED TO HAVE SUCH A

"DYNAMIC AMBASSADOR FROM THE UNITED STATES." HE STRESSED
HIS WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN DEVELOPING OUR RELATIONS.
HE WISHED ME A SUCCESSFUL MISSION AND SAID HIS DOOR WAS
ALWAYS OPEN. HE CONCLUDED THE MEETING BY REITERATING THE
GDR DESIRE FOR GOOD RELATIONS WITH THE UNITED STATES AND
THE IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUING THE DETENTE PROCESS BETWEEN
THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES AS A FACTOR IN
THE DEVELOPMENT OF US-GDR RELATIONS. BOLEN
UNQUOTE CHRISTOPHER

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